

Message Text

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64

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 OMB-01

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R 171931Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5587

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE GUATEMALA 0308

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, GT

SUBJECT: COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC WORKS MINISTER REPLACED

1. ON JANUARY 16 GUSTAVO ANZUETO VIELMAN WAS REPLACED AS MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC WORKS BY RICARDO ARGUEDAS MARTINEZ, WHO HAD BEEN SERVING SINCE THE START OF THE LAUGERUD GOVERNMENT (JULY 1) AS SECOND VICE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC WORKS. ARGUEDAS, AN ENGINEER, IS NOT KNOWN TO BE ACTIVE IN ANY POLITICAL PARTY. HE REPORTEDLY IS CLOSE TO LAUGERUD AND CAMPAIGNED HARD FOR THE LAUGERUD TICKET.

2. A NUMBER OF OTHER CHANGES ALSO WERE MADE JANUARY 16 IN SUBORDINATE POSITIONS OF THE SAME MINISTRY, INCLUDING THE ROADS DEPARTMENT, TELEPHONE SERVICE AND HO TAL SERVICE. NEW DIRECTORS-GENERAL ALSO WERE NAMED FOR INDECA AND DIGESA, TWO AGENCIES OF THE AGRICULTURE MINISTRY, AND A NEW PRESIDENT WAS APPOINTED IN BANVI, THE HOUSING BANK.

3. COMMENT: LAUGERUD WAS UNDER HEAVY PRESSURE FROM ALL OF THE COALITION PARTIES TO NAME THEIR MEN TO THE KEY PATRONAGE-DISPENSING POSITION. IN APPOINTING ARGUEDAS, LAUGERUD APPEARS TO HAVE CONTINUED HIS POLICY OF KEEPING EXECUTIVE BRANCH IN HANDS OF NON-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PARTISAN PROFESSIONALS. THE ARGUEDAS APPOINTMENT PUTS

THE GOVERNMENT'S MOST IMPORTANT PATRONAGE-DISPENSING
MINISTER IN THE HANDS OF A PERSONAL FRIEND OF LAUGERUD.
OF MAJOR POLITICAL INTEREST IN COMING WEEKS WILL BE
WHETHER ARGUEDAS WILL PROTECT FORMER PRESIDENT ARANA'S
INTERESTS IN COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC MINISTRY, WHERE
ROADS DEPARTMENT IS BACKBONE OF CAO (ARANISTA) PARTY
STRUCTURE.
ANDREWS

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Reason:
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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05 JUL 2006

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TAGS: PINT, GT, (VIELMAN, GUSTAVO ANZUETO), (MARTINEZ, RICARDO AGUEDAS)
To: STATE
Type: TE
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